CRUDE CONDITIONS IN AMERICAN MUSICAL EDUCATION

BY

SAMUEL WINKLEY COLE

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Every American musician owes it to himself, his art, and his country to possess himself of the contents of this little book.

CRUDE CONDITIONS IN AMERICAN MUSICAL EDUCATION

I

Ignorance of Fundamentals

The following item was recently seen in a well-known German periodical: "There are upwards of one hundred Americans now in Germany endeavoring to finish a musical education which was never begun." This, in more dignified phraseology, means that, from the German point of view, American musical training or education is lacking in the fundamentals. There are scores of piano players who possess a good degree of keyboard facility and many singers who possess considerable vocal facility, to whom a page of unfamiliar music is little better than a blank page, except as they ascertain how it sounds by playing it. The sight conveys no idea to them of the sound. Many readers will exclaim: "How could any one be expected to know how it sounds until it is heard?"

This question alone is quite sufficient to prove the soundness of the German criticism just quoted. It also reveals the cause, — namely, a deep popular ignorance of what constitutes the true foundation of a musical education. No such degree of ignorance exists as to what constitutes the foundation of a literary, scientific, or business education. Therefore no one thinks of sending a child to a teacher of English grammar before that child has learned to read and write. If one could imagine such an absurdity, he could also imagine that there could be found teachers who would undertake the task.

"How absurd!" says the reader, who evidently does not know that there are not only teachers, but institutions which are trying to teach harmony — the grammar of music — to those to whom the

printed signs of music mean nothing unless heard by the outward ear; to pupils who would not recognize *Home, Sweet Home, Old Hundred,* or *Yankee Doodle* if the bare notes of these tunes were laid before them without words or titles. It will be strange news to many that such recognition is to be expected of a student of music, — nay more, that it is among the possibilities. These same individuals, however, if asked to name the proper foundation of a French education, would exclaim, "Why, of course, the ability to speak, read, and write the French language."

But it is necessary to go a bit deeper than this and ask what is meant by the ability to read a language. Is it not that familiarity with the signs of language which enables us to comprehend an English sentence the instant it meets our eyes? If asked to prove it, how quickly and with what little mental effort we turn the printed words into speech! If asked to write a sentence read by another, we as easily reproduce it in our own handwriting. These are the most common attainments; common alike to poor and rich, to the dull and brilliant; attainments, too, which must be gained before any further education in English is possible. This is also the verdict of public opinion, as well as of the educator. Precisely these same attainments in music constitute the only true foundation for a musical education.

Let us compare the two. Here is a fragment of a well-known sentence, "a government of the people, by the people, for the people." Here is a fragment of an equally well-known melody:



With what vividness those well-known words from the Gettysburg address hit the eyes! Is the same thing true of the notes? To a musician the two experiences are absolutely parallel. This, then, is the true foundation for a musical education.

The True Foundation for a Musical Education

A little reflection will reveal to any reader the very small number of his acquaintances among music students who reach this standard. It will also convince him of the justice of the German criticism

which heads this chapter. The idea that music is a language will come as a surprise to many genuine lovers of music. To them music is an ear-tickler, or a foot-mover, but if they are really lovers of music the truth that music is a language — a medium of expression for all the emotions of the soul — will be a most welcome one and they will listen to music with a new interest.

The present writer can well remember the time when even in the country towns of New England it was the popular sentiment that a good "ear for music" was the first requirement necessary to a musical career. This sentiment died out long ago, and the cause of its demise is a strange one, so strange that it has, perhaps, no parallel in the history of education; namely, the increase of opportunities for music study.

In a certain village in New England, a village which could boast of rather more than average intelligence on account of the presence there of an academy with its corps of well-trained instructors, there were but four keyboard instruments: three six octave pianos and a seraphine. There were two flourishing churches with a good volunteer chorus choir in each church, but no organ or any other instrument of the keyboard class. Those were the days of the old fashioned fugue tunes. These and an anthem, "a voluntary by the choir," were sung without accompaniment at every service. This was in 1858. To-day, in that same village there must be a score or two of pianos or organs. The two flourishing churches are still there, with a pipe organ in one of them and a good reed organ in the other, but no choirs worthy to be compared with those of the former period.

The old fashioned singing school, that splendid promoter of music and matrimony, has departed, and with it have gone the popular belief in the necessity for a musical ear in those who study music, and that splendid interest in choral music which was the distinguishing feature in the New England of fifty years ago.

Result of the Spread of Keyboard Instruments

In the educational centres of the United States a like strange thing has happened. There has been a great increase of those who study music. Students of piano, voice, and of the more common

orchestral instruments abound in great numbers. Teachers of these instruments of all grades of ability have multiplied to meet the demand; but with all these increased facilities the sense of what is the first requirement for a proposed musical career, namely, an ear which is sensitive to pitch and rhythm, has altogether died out. These are the facts.

But why should increased musical opportunities kill out musical intelligence? The answer is easy: the multiplication of keyboard instruments led to the study of music by many who were known to have little or no ear for music. Their success in manipulating the keyboard caused the impression to prevail that an ear for music is not necessary to the successful study of the piano or organ. As a natural result of this movement, those who loved to sing discovered that they could learn their songs by rote from the piano. Then they went further and had their "voices cultivated" without the slightest regard to the presence or absence of some degree of musical sense. As the natural result of this, there sprang into being a thousand and one teachers of vocal and instrumental music of all grades, who were willing, for what there was in it, financially, to instruct any and all who might apply for lessons. This is the condition of things at the present time, for which, it is evident, the musical profession is largely responsible. Certainly the more prominent members knew better, but their attitude has been a disdainful one toward those who, though possessed of but a small amount of musical ability, yet loved music intensely; disdainful also toward those musicians who, if less gifted musically, were highly endowed pedagogically, and who were more humanely disposed toward their less gifted pupils; disdainful even toward the study of sight-singing. Had these leaders of the profession seen fit to insist that pupils should begin their musical training at the proper point, the development of a better ear and eye for music, the situation would have been greatly improved. Some of these prominent men in the profession seem to feel that it is of no earthly use to undertake to develop a better ear in those whose sense of pitch is below the average. A little honest investigation on their part would have convinced them of the fallacy of their position.

Singers Depend upon the Piano

But it is in the realm of vocal culture that the neglect of the fundamentals of a musical education finds its plainest illustration.

In this realm the piano is the main dependence, and singers learn everything in parrot fashion. This goes on until the power to think in music becomes atrophied. As a result of these conditions a great injustice is practised upon organists, accompanists, choirmasters, and orchestral players who have to be musicians in a better sense. As a rule the singer gets the larger salary, while these better musicians are often forced to teach the singer her part. This has become so much a matter of course that no notice whatever is taken of it. If the singer and the song be sufficiently interesting everything else is condoned. But suppose the tables were turned and the singer were forced to teach the organist or choirmaster his part, what a cry of derision would go up!

> "Strange such a difference there should be
> Twixt tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee."

Can the musical profession give a satisfactory answer to these questions? Is there any valid reason why the ability to vocalize correctly and the ability to sing at sight intelligently should not progress together? Is it necessary in order to develop the voice to give a pupil studies which are beyond his ability to read? Is there any adequate reason why the musical profession should not conform, in its teaching, to the sound pedagogic laws which are observed by the best teachers in all other professions?

Enough has been written to prove the justice of the German criticism already referred to, but criticism, however sound, is of little use without the suggestion of a remedy.

Train the Ear and the Eye

If music is a language it can be learned by people of average intelligence, just as French and German are learned. But what is to be done about it? Again the answer is easy: Let every one who is a musician to any extent, and who does not hear music as he

hears language, through the eyes, set about remedying the defect without delay. Assuredly it is quite remediable, if the student be tractable and industrious. Let every parent who wishes his children to be well grounded in music see to it that they are properly trained while they are young. Let him see to it that the training in musical notation goes hand in hand with training in tone-making. Let him not be deceived by any talk about "psychological methods." There is no royal road to learning. Those who attempt to find such a road, no matter with how famous or magnetic a guide, will find themselves stranded at some way station a long distance short of their destination.

But whether the student be a child or an adult, that method should be selected which is adequate to all grades of music, and that with as infrequent resort to the piano as possible. Let the musical profession change its attitude toward this question, or, in the name of common honesty, cease to take the money of those who are musically deaf and blind. Were all the pupils of this class to drop the study of music, many prosperous institutions would be compelled to close their doors, and a multitude of private music teachers would be forced to seek some other means of support. If, then, the musical profession would have the patronage of this class of pupils, why should it not unite to make the course in musical training as sound, as logical and pedagogical, as that given in other professions?

By following out such a course the reproach which now rests on the Americans who go to Europe to complete their musical studies will gradually be removed.

II

Talent and the Ability to Work

Not long ago, a young friend of mine wished to study with Mr. Z., a pianist and teacher with an enviable reputation on two continents. With a desire to help the young man, I called Mr. Z. to the telephone and stated the case, adding, "He has talent and is a good worker." Quick as thought there came back the reply, "And that 's talent, too."

Now, if there is one such truth more than another which needs to be written on the heavens in the United States of America it is this: THE ABILITY TO WORK IS TALENT. We read the story of the hare and the tortoise; that genius is but the capacity for taking pains; that even the Maker of all the universe is a worker, etc., etc.; yet it all seems to make no impression. The get-there-quick principle seems to be the ruling one. We are ever forgetting that half the pleasure of an attainment is in the effort to reach it, rather than in the thing itself.

Will Americans never learn that nothing really worth while is gained without much toilsome work? What if in the material world there is here and there one who is so unfortunate as to get rich quick; or, in the educational world, there is another who seems to acquire knowledge and facility, apparently without an effort? Usually such persons come to little; they lack the discipline which develops strong characters; sooner or later life brings obstacles which will not down at a glance, and things go to pieces.

To make the situation still worse, the past twenty-five years have developed a certain class of teachers, so-called, who cater to the spirit of indolence in this way: they say that young people cannot be expected to work at that which is not interesting; that if a subject is not interesting, it is the fault of the teacher, and so on; and then they give the pupil a pedagogic anesthetic so that he may not

sense the pain of the work which must be done. As a result we have young men and young women who possess no moral stamina, no back-bone. How much better it would be for such individuals and for the nation if these young people had been trained to act up to duty, if they had been taught the momentous fact that every honorable position in life carries with it a certain amount of drudgery which one cannot honorably escape; that no brilliancy of intellect, no amount of wealth will free us from this drudgery; and that it is the part of manhood and of womanhood cheerfully to perform it.

Those who have been called to pass over Huntington Avenue, Boston, frequently, in the past five years, have seen the buildings of the Harvard Medical School and the new Art Museum in process of construction and in their finished state. That they are ornaments to the city none will deny, but for many months they were surrounded by building material in confused heaps and débris of various sorts. The unfinished structures thus environed could have been little less than offensive to the eyes of all observers. Out of all this apparent disorder and confusion have come these models of architectural beauty which promise to remain objects of honest pride to every Bostonian.

What is true of architecture as seen in this illustration is true of every work of art and of every artist while in the making. It is not expected of the painter or the sculptor that he will paint the picture or model the statue with unsoiled hands.

Music Education, not Play, but Work

But when we approach the musical art then, according to the popular idea in America, it must be play, not work. The phrase "play the piano" seems to have been interpreted in its most literal sense.

How far this is from the real truth every earnest student of music knows. Think of the muscular development, the co-ordination of mind, ear, eye, and fingers, which can be accomplished only through the repetition of the same act a thousand times; I mention a single instance within the experience of even those who play but a very little.

Probably the majority of those who have studied the piano began

with music which could be played on the white keys. All such will have no difficulty in recalling the effort it cost them to remember to use one or more black keys and to use them at the right time. Now all this has become automatic, they have but to glance at the signature and the thing is done. This is but a trifling difficulty compared with the multitude of obstacles which must be met and vanquished before one can really be said to play the piano. But this labor does not count if one may only see that some progress is being made toward the desired end. Indeed, right here is a truth to be emphasized, — the real joy of living is not in reaching the goal of one's ambition, but in making conscious progress towards it.

It is a pity that the idea ever got abroad that work is a curse pronounced upon man because of his disobedience. All the great and good men and women of all time have found work to be a blessing, while those of no ambition have dragged out a miserable existence. How many examples of this truth might be cited in almost every line of endeavor! But we are concerned with music. Out of the many we will mention but two.

Two Illustrations

A friend of mine called one day on Mr. B. when the latter was a student in Leipzig. On entering the room Mr. B. said, "Come in, I am particularly glad to see you, for my landlady has just burst in here, saying, 'You have played that passage 150 times by actual count and I won't stand it; you must find other lodgings and at once.'"

It is said that when the late William H. Sherwood was with Liszt, the great master advised him, on account of his small hands, to give up the idea of becoming a concert pianist and to devote himself to composition. We all know that the advice was not taken, but we can have no conception whatever of the vast amount of labor it cost Mr. Sherwood to stretch those hands until he could strike an octave and two notes. Here is an instance where that which might well have been considered a physical impossibility was overcome by sheer determination coupled with the hardest kind of work.

"But," says the reader, "these men had talent and it paid for them to work!"

Yes, to be sure, but if they had not possessed *the talent for work* in a marked degree, the world would never have heard of them.

It is only in American musical circles that the talent for work is despised. We are still so commercial in our tastes that we cannot appreciate the man who turns his back on a possible financial success that he may work for the art he loves, asking only that he may be able to raise the standard of that art in his own land. As early as 1846, Charles Dickens wrote thus — " It would be well for the American people if they could love the Real less and the Ideal more."

Two Classes who Need Encouragement

There are two classes of Americans electing to study music, who particularly need the encouragement which this article contains. First, those who have marked musical gifts and are quite content to do, in music, what is easy for them, and no more. They will be found in the music and the musical instrument stores, in the dance halls, in vaudeville, and in light opera. Oftentimes their musical gift is far above the average; but they lack the talent for work, and this lack neutralizes their gift. The result is that they are lost to the world and to the art which they might have adorned. Could they but realize the dignity of labor and the opportunity they have to raise the standard of their art by the logical development of their own gifts, they might find in this realization the inspiration necessary to the occasion. There are enough whose gifts are more commercial than musical to supply the demand in the world of commerce.

Those who possess musical gifts should regard that fact as an indication of a divine call to consecrate their lives to the divine art. It is emphatically the result of my observation that, in America, there is only occasionally one of real musical ability who goes into music in any serious way. " There is not enough money in it," they say. Will the day ever dawn in the " land of the free " when men and women will be content to be poor if they may but spend their lives in improving the conditions amid which they live?

The other class of Americans who should find help in this article may be described thus:—It is made up of individuals who possess

a consuming love for music with but little musical instinct. They are nearly always deficient in that gift which, in the older civilizations, has always been considered the first and best proof of the possession of instinctive musical ability — an ear which is sensitive to pitch and rhythm. Not infrequently, however, these persons are highly endowed pedagogically; they usually possess also the talent for work. Many of the greatest teachers have come from this class, and so long as teaching continues to be "the musician's real estate" this class bids fair to be at least self-supporting. Quite frequently, too, students of this type learn the keyboard easily. For all such I have the encouraging message that a good ear can be developed in any person who is a good worker and who is musical enough to sing the major scale.

How We Gain Power

The powers we possess have become ours in two ways — by first nature, or second nature. A few of them we were born with, such as the instinct to break the contact between our flesh and the thing that burns or cuts us, the instinct to close the eyelid without an act of the will, the instinct to take the first food which Nature provides for us. This about completes the list.

Most of the powers which we possess, however, we have acquired by second nature, — that is, we have repeated the same action by an act of the will so many times that it does itself. It has become secondarily instinctive. In this way, in the realm of common things, we have learned to walk, to talk, to read, to write, to skate, to ride the bicycle, etc. In the realm of music, an organist uses his hands and feet at the same time and often manipulates the couplers and registers while his eyes are mainly fixed on the notes. The violinist uses the full length of the bow, again little bits of it; he produces the actual tone of the string, and again its harmonics, and goes from one action to another so rapidly that the will cannot consciously act for each separate manipulation. Think of the times each process must have been repeated before the action became automatic! Think of how tedious the practice must have been! yet the object to be attained spurred him on. Though he became

very tired *in* the work, he did not tire *of* it; he rested and then went at it again and again until the battle was won.

It ought to be some consolation to those of lesser musical gifts to know that, if they possess the ability to work, they are to that extent worthy to be classed with the very great musicians of all time.

There are few whose artistic instincts are complete on every side and even the few cannot escape the drudgery. Therefore, we end this chapter as we began it, with the declaration that THE ABILITY TO WORK IS TALENT. Best of all, this talent can be cultivated.

III

A Contrast

Some years ago there was in Boston a young violinist of much ability who had received his early musical training in Paris. He was in the habit of playing duets at sight with a fellow student. One day he encountered a passage which he did not succeed in playing on account of the peculiar rhythms it contained. "Well," said he, "I can *say* it if I cannot play it," and he immediately said the sol-fa syllables in perfect time. Can an American who has never witnessed it, imagine such a thing as the production, with the organs of speech, of a passage like the following?

A. Lavignac
No. 27, Bk. 3



This is an every day occurrence in the solfeggio classes of the Paris Conservatory. That famous music school stands first among all schools of its class, in that it begins its musical training in the right place. It develops its students from the inside out instead of from the outside in. Children who display signs of possessing well marked musical gifts are received as pupils in the solfeggio classes as early as at nine years of age.

In this great school, music is taught first as a language which bears the same relation to a musical education as the mastery of English bears to an English education. With us, English is the medium for the expression of ideas. One may use it as one chooses, — in trade or in professional life. In the same way a student who has mastered solfeggio in France can sing at sight, can put on paper what he hears; in short, can use it precisely as he uses his power of speech. He knows how the music will sound by merely looking at the notes and can prove his knowledge by making the proper sounds

with his voice or by detecting the slightest error when the tones are produced by another. He is now prepared for a musical career in any line. He may finally elect to become a vocalist, a violinist, a pianist, an organist, an oboist, a contrabassist, or a composer. All this is done while he is yet in his teens.

After he is well grounded in solfeggio he begins the study of some instrument. The boy whose picture is to be seen on an adjoining page was in his last year of solfeggio. I heard him sing at sight the following study with clef changes without the slightest hesitation.

STUDIES IN CHANGING CLEFS



The following passages were written in my presence after being played three times, the former by the boy just mentioned, the latter by a girl nine and a half years of age.

DICTATION EXERCISE





Henri Richet
12 Years Old

DICTATION EXERCISE

SARAH PESTRE
9½ years old



This scheme of changing clefs is an enigma to the average American. But like most European methods of teaching music, it has its foundation in good sense; the purpose of it is to make transposition easy. Pupils who are thus trained have but to imagine a certain combination of clefs with the signature of the desired key and the transposition is effected.

The very existence of the Paris Conservatory as the national music school shows plainly the attitude of the French nation toward its own musical development. To it the children who have musical gifts are sent free of charge. There they receive the best training the world can offer to a student. Prizes are offered at the examinations and every other spur to ambitious industry and diligence is applied. The famous *Prix de Rome* by which the winner can spend two years in Rome with all expenses paid is the crowning prize.

The attitude of many of the most famous musicians of France toward solfeggio as the foundation of a musical education is striking. They have not considered it beneath their dignity to write works for the solfeggio classes.

The list includes such names as Cherubini, A. Thomas, Gossec, Méhul, and Lavignac. Those who have taken pains to examine Lavignac's work on *Musical Dictation* must have been impressed with the great importance he attached to this study.

For the information of those who have never seen this work it

may be stated that it contains more than 500 closely printed pages and more than 1500 studies, many of these capable of 8 variations. All these, be it remembered, were written not for pupils with slow ears, but expressly for the *talented youth who gain admission to the Conservatory*.

Everyone must have heard of Artemas Ward's regiment of colonels; this ridiculous creation of the humorist finds its actual embodiment in the American manner of patronizing the various musical instruments — piano, organ, violin, cornet, and flute; these about complete the list of the so-called *solo instruments*. An orchestra composed entirely of these instruments would be just about as serviceable as that regiment of colonels. The bassoon, clarinet, French horn, viola, 'cello, contrabass, etc. are pretty much neglected. This is not the case in France. There the contrabass is studied as one studies dentistry here with the intention of making it a lifework. So with these other instruments of the orchestra which are almost wholly neglected in America.

An American will send his son to a law school, that he may be trained to practice law; to a medical college that he may be trained to practice medicine; or to the Institute of Technology that he may be trained as a civil or electrical engineer. The main purpose of this training is, of course, that he may be fitted to gain a livelihood, and, incidentally perhaps, that he may contribute his abilities to the advancement of his profession.

But who ever heard of an American who would for any reason whatsoever devote his son to the profession of the contrabassist or oboist? Nay, more, would not the average American parent oppose with might and main any such choice of a profession on the part of his son? And yet, if we in America are to have many symphony orchestras somebody must learn to play these non-solo instruments in an artistic manner; somebody must choose them as a profession for life. Under these circumstances is it any wonder that American names are very exceptional among the members of symphony orchestras in America?

The story of one such musician, a member of one of the leading orchestras of America, is interesting. This man began the study of the trombone while he was in his teens, because his father had played the instrument when he was a young man and still cherished an affection for it. Later this young musician began the study

of the trombone in a serious way and in due season distinguished himself as trombone soloist in one of the leading military bands. He also gained some valuable operatic experience with an opera company which performed for one whole season in his vicinity.

One of his near relatives is a very successful business man, whose business frequently brings to his office distinguished representatives of the great corporations. Once in a while the musician drops into the office and is introduced to one of these business magnates — "Ah, pleased to meet you"; turning to the business man he says, "Is your brother in business with you, Mr. Smith?" "No, he is a musician; he is the first trombone player in the —— Orchestra." "Then," says the musician, "I can see myself descend about 100 points in the estimation of the business man and hear him say to himself, 'Well, he cannot amount to much if that is the way he gets his living.'"

Here is where Americans lack information. There is every reason to believe that, in the matter of brains and general ability, the musician is the full equal of the business man, although the latter may make one thousand dollars a week and the former but fifty. The musician is happy in his work. He knows that his success in his profession adds at least one mite to the slowly gaining sentiment which will eventually redeem his native land from her present sordid idolatry of material wealth.

America has produced some splendid examples of intellectual ability. Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, Daniel Webster are familiar types of this class; yet no one of them was a multi-millionaire, and it is by no means certain that he would have been had he lived in our time. That these were brainy men no one will deny; yet it is safe to assert that no one of them ever encountered a task which demanded such rapid mental insight, such simultaneous grasp of so many different lines of thought, in short, such a powerful intellect as that which is displayed by our symphony and operatic conductors in every performance. Think you that these men could not have amassed property if they had chosen to devote their energies, abilities, and time to that end? Let us be thankful that they did not so choose! Would not a multi-millionaire make quite as ridiculous a figure if placed at the conductor's stand with a baton in his hand to conduct an opera or a symphony, as the musician would make in attempting to conduct the millionaire's

business? "Every man to his trade," says some one. To this we all agree and no one sooner than our trombonist, who would hasten to credit the business man with brains. Why, then, should not the business man credit the musician with brains equally as good as his own?

If everybody were to devote his energies to money-making, where then were the symphonies, operas, pictures, and all the other forms of art which delight our senses? Money can, in part, pay an artist, but can it produce the type of brains which makes the artist? Were even this possible, it is still quite conceivable that the ability to amass a fortune might be much more easily acquired than the ability to write a great opera or symphony.

In my boyhood, I was frequently called into the office of the village legal factotum to witness the signatures on legal documents. It was not an uncommon occurrence that a signer, although a real American, must make his mark because he or she could neither read nor write. It is safe to assert that to-day in that same town not one person could be found of whom this could be said. What has made the change between then and now? Public opinion. Public opinion has multiplied the school. Public opinion says that such a degree of ignorance is a disgrace. Public opinion in France says that those who would become musicians *must* sing at sight and that at *first* sight. This means the complete mastery, while yet in childhood, of every conceivable succession of intervals and every possible form of rhythm. Can an American teacher of voice or instrument imagine a pupil twelve years of age who knows these fundamentals of a musical education as well as he himself knows them? Public opinion has established and supported a *free* national music school for the development of the musical talent, first, of the French nation, and under certain conditions, of the world. A Frenchman told me recently that a Chinaman could enter the Paris Conservatory if he possessed the requisite degree of musical ability. Public opinion sanctions the bestowal of prizes upon those whose native musical talent and ability to work are up to the required standard.

In short, public opinion in France respects art and the artist. In other words, to be a genuine artist in Paris is to have one's blood as blue as it would be in Boston or New York if he were a multi-millionaire. The following will show at a glance the contrast between France and America in matters musical.

IN FRANCE	IN AMERICA
1. Notes are first symbols of tones.	1. Notes are first symbols of keys on the piano, etc.
2. A musical ear is of prime importance in the choice of a musical career.	2. A musical ear is not a factor of importance in the choice of a musical career.
3. Musical notation means tones and rhythm wholly apart from a musical instrument.	3. Musical notation means little except as applied to some instrument.
4. Children who possess marked musical gifts are devoted to a musical career.	4. Children who possess marked musical gifts are rarely devoted to a musical career.
5. Such children are thoroughly trained in the fundamentals of a musical education while they are yet children.	5. Such children are supposed not to need the fundamentals of a musical education.
6. The ability to master the musical art is incontestable proof of the possession of a keen intellect.	6. The ability to master the musical art may be the proof of the possession of a keen intellect but not to the same degree as the ability to corner the market.
7. Composers of the first rank have written voluminously for solfeggio.	7. No composer of first rank has written anything for solfeggio.
8. Public opinion makes work a necessity no matter how talented an individual may be.	8. Public opinion is more likely to consider a disposition to work an indication of a small musical gift.
9. Public opinion sanctions the support of a great *free* national conservatory of music.	9. Public opinion sanctions nothing of the sort.
10. A well defined national method of sight-singing which is applicable *to all forms of music study.*	10. No well defined national method of sight-singing. Those in vogue are not well adapted to all forms of music study.

Another Unfortunate Condition

There is another unfortunate condition which bears hard on the musical profession: I refer to the failure of the American public to appreciate the fact that a musical education costs a great deal of hard work, time, and money.

This condition manifests itself in many ways: a pupil engages to take lessons and makes an appointment for a certain hour twice each week. The teacher reserves those hours for that pupil. Out of twenty hours the pupil misses five and gives no notice of such intention. When the bill is presented there is a protest on the part of the pupil because the omitted lessons are not to be made up. If the appointments had been made with a dentist the patient would have taken pains to give ample notice of the intention to miss the appointment or would have expected to pay for it.

Again, a church engages a quartet of singers at the lowest possible salary. In addition to the regular services in rehearsals and in church the singers are asked repeatedly to sing, gratuitously, at this sociable and that reception. If any hesitation is manifested on the part of any singer to accept these invitations that singer at once becomes unpopular in that congregation.

Again, musicians of all classes are expected to contribute their services in aid of this or that charity. Those who are generous enough to participate in the performance thereby contribute as much to the cause as they would receive for their services at a similar concert for which the regular fee was paid. This fee, at a very moderate estimate, would range from twenty-five to one hundred and twenty-five dollars. Those who attend the concert contribute, individually, from fifty cents to two dollars, and receive in return the full worth of their money in the enjoyment of the concert and without the slightest strain upon their nerves. The artists contribute from ten to fifty times as much and are subjected to the fatigue and nerve strain which every true artist feels. Will the reader please be good enough to state why these generous performers owe to any cause so much more than the individuals owe who compose the audience? The musician's ability is his substance, his living; the doctor's his; the lawyer's his. We do not expect the doctor to attend us gratuitously nor the lawyer to counsel and defend us without a fee. Why, then, do we make an exception of the musician and expect him to give right and left of his substance without a financial reward?

IV

Not many years ago a young woman with a fine voice came to Boston to study music. As is usually the case, she did not possess the musical instincts to match the voice. One day, some months after her arrival, she was told by her solfeggio teacher to sing unaccompanied a certain study in E minor. After she had made several ineffectual attempts the study was passed on to the next pupil, and so on, with varying success, around the class. At this point the young woman referred to above, who had been the first one to attempt the study, said, " I can sing it now," and, on receiving permission, she proceeded to do it.

To the novice this feat may seem surprising, but it was not so to the teacher. He knew that the young woman's imitative faculty had been cultivated at the expense of her thinking faculty, but not quite to the point of complete atrophy as has been done in many another case.

This incident completely illustrates the present situation among singers: they guess, they " catch on " to the accompaniment; while the singer who can really think pitch and rhythm, as the instrumentalist is compelled to do, is so rare as to be almost an unknown quantity. The astonishing thing is, however, that intelligent musicians, who know better, should lend themselves to a course of action which begins in indolence and ends in incapability. I see two principal causes which have led so many excellent musicians into the false position they now occupy. First, the lack of sympathy and co-operation among musicians along educational lines; second, the lack of a sight-singing method which, while adequate to all grades of difficulty and every style of composition, is yet within the reach of students of average musical ability or less.

The Lack of Co-operation among Musicians

The problem which confronts all conscientious and efficient teachers of voice and instrument is not the development of musical pupils, but rather the instruction of those who greatly desire to study music and yet have little or no native musical instinct. Like the young woman whose story heads this chapter, they have the voice or the hands but no corresponding degree of musical ability. Nevertheless, the situation would not be so discouraging as it is if there had existed between musicians and musical institutions that degree of sympathy, good will, and co-operation which has existed for years between elementary and high schools, academies, and the college and university. This lack of co-operation is not because there is nothing musical in the lower schools with which to co-operate, but because of a lack of breadth of view on the part of musicians.

The Founders of American Public School Music

It is now about seventy years since Dr. Lowell Mason succeeded in introducing the study of music into the Boston public schools. Since his time Mr. Luther Whiting Mason and Mr. Hosea E. Holt have greatly helped on the cause; the former by systematizing the study with a course of graded text-books; the latter by systematizing the study to a still higher degree of efficiency by placing in the hands of the regular teachers such well-graded and abundant material for music study that their service could be enlisted in the cause of music under the direction of an intelligent supervisor. The importance of this movement cannot be overstated, because by means of it there can be a music lesson and song singing every day instead of once a week or once in two weeks, as formerly, at the periodical visit of the special teacher of music. As a result of their efforts and those of many other earnest men and women, there is in the public schools of Massachusetts and some other states a better organized and better equipped course of music study than I was able to find in France, Germany, or England. This is not saying that we cannot learn much from either of these nations; but I am persuaded that we can learn no more from them than they can

learn from us. Indeed, the musical profession of America would be surprised if it could know the amount of intelligent, conscientious, and self-sacrificing work which is being done in the public schools for the musical instruction and cultivation of the rising generation.

The Music Teachers' National Convention

It is true that the Music Teachers' National Association, since it came under the control of the professors of music connected with our colleges and universities, has made an effort to get into touch with the supervisors of music in the grammar and high schools, and that with a measure of good results. The great mass of musicians, however, has held itself aloof from organization and from any form of co-operation of this nature. Suppose now that for the past decade there had been between the musical profession at large and those in the public schools the same co-operation in the matter of music which has existed for so many decades between the lower schools and the higher institutions of learning, do you not believe that there would have been far less excuse for the constant benumbing, fatal appeal to the imitative faculty than there is at present? Is it not more than probable that the standard of general musical intelligence would be far higher than it is to-day?

The Need of a Better Acquaintance among Music Teachers

I would that it were possible for me to reach the ears of the leaders of the musical profession in America. If I could but command their attention, I could soon interest them in the honest and sincere efforts of many teachers and supervisors of music in the public schools. I would very soon convince them that, however great their knowledge, they do not know it all; that these humble men and women, of whom the world may never hear, possess pedagogic skill which one might well envy and which is as worthy of respect as the musical or creative skill of the leaders. How often have I seen and heard them hold the interested attention of a class of restless youngsters while they developed a new point in tone or rhythm. I would prove to these great musicians that here

as elsewhere no man "liveth to himself alone"; that the shortest road to the fullest recognition of their own work is through a hearty, sympathetic co-operation with these earnest, devoted workers in their humble sphere. I would make it clear that any feeling of superiority over these earnest workers is unworthy of real musicians, and is an actual reflection upon their own culture and breadth of mind.

A Universal Sight-singing Method

There has been another important cause for the lack of sympathy between the two extremes of the musical profession: the lack of a universal sight-singing method; and this is my second point in this discussion. Nearly all American musicians of renown have received their musical training through the symbols of absolute pitch: the letter names. The vast majority of musical amateurs of the past one hundred years, from whose ranks have come the singing school teachers and supervisors of public school music, have received their musical training through the movable do or the symbols of relative pitch. But the first rate musician, who has attempted to come into touch with the music in the elementary schools, has been confronted at the very outset with the total inadequacy of the movable-do method as a foundation for a musical education. On the other hand, the movable-do man feels that his method is his musical all-in-all; he can think tones no other way. It is evident, then, that some other plan must be discovered if these two classes of musicians are ever to come into full sympathy.

It is with no little satisfaction that I make the announcement that a method has been found which will unite these two parties: the representatives of absolute and relative pitch; that this method has been thoroughly tested during the past seven years in the solfeggio classes of the largest musical institution on this continent.

As the entire English language may be reduced to twenty-six letters, so the whole of music may be reduced to thirteen intervals. Since this article will be read by many who are not musicians I am taking pains to make my meaning very clear. An interval is the association of any two tones. These tones may be played together, like a chord, or in immediate succession. In any case *the effect of*

the same two tones is always the same, and there are but thirteen of these effects. To the average ear the sound of a single tone is a vague affair. But the effect of any two tones, played or sung together or in succession, presents characteristics which, being always the same, can be remembered by any person of no more than average musical ability. These facts are not new, they are ancient to every real musician. The difficulty has been in making singers think intervals, or to master even interval analysis sufficiently to be able to distinguish one interval from another.

A very good singer said to me recently, "Why, I sing by interval. I always think that the next tone is a third or a fourth from the last one." "So far so good," I replied. "But there are three kinds of thirds and three kinds of fourths, and you must know their difference before you can sing by interval." All these difficulties are overcome by the use of a set of syllables, each of which means *two* tones or an interval. Everybody knows that the major scale is made up of two major seconds (or whole steps), a minor second (or half step), three major seconds and a minor second, therefore the following illustration will make my meaning clear:



The association of the effect of a major second, for instance, with the syllable "may" helps the student to memorize the particular effect of a major second. The use of these syllables compels the student to know the notation perfectly. In the same way, the remaining twelve intervals may be learned, each one with its own particular syllable. The interval analysis is accomplished by means of the symbols of *absolute pitch:* the letters. The memory of the interval itself by means of a syllable which stands for interval effect or *relative pitch.* Thus the two factions (the representatives of absolute and relative pitch) are united in a method which may be properly termed universal, because, as every musician knows, the interval method is adequate to all kinds of music, while the syllables bring the intervals within the reach of students of no more than average musical ability.

"But," asks some one, "is not the interval analysis very difficult to master?"

I reply, "No more difficult than the multiplication table and it requires no different kind of brains."

"But," asks another, "does it not require a high native sense of pitch to memorize the intervals themselves?"

Again I answer, "No better sense of pitch than is needed to learn the bugle calls in the army." My movable-do friend will find in this method a great relief from the confusion he has felt when trying to apply his method to music which contained many accidental sharps and flats. He was confused by the many chromatic syllables he was obliged to use and he was confused also because his sense of key, upon which the movable-do method is based, had become clouded, and he had no clear sense of the pitch of the next tone he must sing. In *Intervallia* you have but to know *easily* what syllable you should use for the next interval and the thing is done; if it is not done the reason is clear; you have not yet mastered *that* interval. *I submit that it is one step nearer success to know what interval you should sing even though you are unable to sing it than it is to be in darkness at both points.*

In the last chapter I showed what the young students of the Paris Conservatory could do in sight-singing and in the recognition of pitch and rhythm. On the evening of the 24th of May, 1911, a class of young men and women showed what they could do along the same lines before an audience which was fairly representative of Bostonian musical intelligence. These young people had been thoroughly trained in *Intervallia*, and it is certainly true that the audience gave unmistakable signs of pleasure and satisfaction at what was heard.

The Wide Scope of Intervallia

We have, then, in *Intervallia*, a sight-singing method which meets the needs of the American musical public at every point. It is as good for the instrumentalist as for the vocalist. It is as good for the musically gifted as it is for those less favored and *vice versa.* It can be taught to children as easily as to adults. *Children or adults thus taught will never need to change their method even*

though they may carry their musical studies to the highest possible point.

After years of use of *Intervallia* and careful experimentation with it, I am convinced that even more wonderful results are possible with it than those which are gained with the fixed-do method in the Paris Conservatory.

An analysis of the studies in use in that institution discloses the fact that while they are wonderful in their rhythmical variety and complexity, the melodies are fairly diatonic and not of the modern style, and I heard nothing sung without accompaniment or in parts.

Students trained in *Intervallia* are compelled to sing and to recognize intervals without regard to key or scale relation. They are also trained from the very beginning to sing without accompaniment and in two or more parts. The following extracts from the program of May 24th, already referred to, ought to go far toward proving the claims made for Intervallia: No. 1. *Ecco Quomodo Moritur,* Palestrina. No. 2. Chorale, *Say, Sweetest Jesu,* from the " St. Matthew Passion," Bach. These two numbers were sung unaccompanied, and the change of key and mode was made without instrumental assistance.

No. 3. The following intervals were named by the members of the class in turn. No information was given.

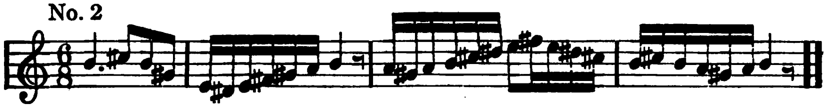


No. 4. The following dictations were written with commendable success by all the members of the class. No information was given except the time signature and the starting note. *In no case was the key or mode given.*

No. 1



No. 2



No. 3



Nos. 2 and 3 were dictated with 2 beats in a measure.

No. 5. The pitch of the following tones was given by the members of the class in turn. The only information given was the pitch of the first *tone*. In other words, the members of the class could name the pitch of all the tones, after the pitch of the starting tone was known, *because they knew the intervals.*



No. 6. *Qui Tollis* — from the *Mass* in B Minor, Bach.

This number was sung with the accompaniment, which is entirely independent of the voice parts.

Two more selections were sung without accompaniment: A fugue from the *Missa Solemnis* in D, Beethoven, and *All Hail Almighty Being* from *Paradise Lost,* by Bossi.

Another significant factor has resulted from the development of this method, namely, a genuine sight-singing text-book the like of which the writer has never seen. This book was given the title of "Melodia" for obvious reasons.

It begins with the simplest melody and progresses, by the easiest stages, to the difficult tasks which may be culled from the modern style of composition. It treats a multiplicity of rhythmic forms, first, by step-wise progressions; it then adds gradually the various intervals as the pupil gains in power, until all intervals and all conventional forms of rhythm have been fully covered.

The book has been often compared to a moving stairway, on which the passenger has but to stay until he has reached the desired elevation. In like manner, the pupil has but to perfect himself in his method until he can sing the studies at first sight as they progress in difficulty throughout the book, and he is sure to end as a competent, intelligent sight-singer.

CONCLUSION

In the foregoing pages I have endeavored to portray the serious faults which exist in the prevailing scheme of musical education in America. These faults, I believe, are distinctly traceable to the lack of an adequate method of fundamental musical training. The present situation is the direct outgrowth of the two antagonistic and inadequate methods which have been in use for more than one hundred years: the movable-*do* method, which breaks down when it is applied to certain styles of musical composition; the fixed-*do* method which is beyond the reach of the vast majority of music students. In both cases the student is compelled, sooner or later, to resort to some musical instrument for assistance. Naturally he says to himself, "If I have to appeal finally to the piano, what is the use of trying to learn a sight-singing method? Why not depend upon the piano and my power of imitation from the beginning?" hence these deplorable conditions.

Because, after much searching, I have found a remedy for these conditions, I have made it known in these pages, as I am constantly endeavoring to do in all my teaching. In fact, no other consistent course is possible. Musicians and music teachers of all classes can, if they choose, find a relief from the drudgery of which they so bitterly complain. Music students of all grades will surely find

in Intervallia the help they need, because, first, the system is based on knowledge, and "KNOWLEDGE IS POWER" IN MUSIC AS ELSEWHERE. Second, INTERVALLIA ENABLES EVERY STUDENT TO DEVELOP HIMSELF TO THE UTMOST LIMIT OF HIS CAPACITY.